

University of Groningen

## The Dutch decentralisation policy: Risks for child protection and child welfare?

Knorth, Erik J.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.**

*Document Version*

Final author's version (accepted by publisher, after peer review)

*Publication date:*

2017

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Knorth, E. J. (2017). *The Dutch decentralisation policy: Risks for child protection and child welfare?*. 1-8. Paper presented at Summer School - The Future of Child and Family Welfare Policy: Looking through different Lenses , Groningen, Netherlands.

**Copyright**

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

**Take-down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.



# The Dutch decentralisation policy

## Risks for child protection and child welfare?

**Prof. Erik J. Knorth, PhD**

Summer School University of Groningen – August 21-25, 2017

‘The Future of Child and Family Welfare Policy:  
Looking through Different Lenses’



university of  
 groningen



## The organizers

Mónica López



Hans Grietens



Lennart Nygren



Floor Middel

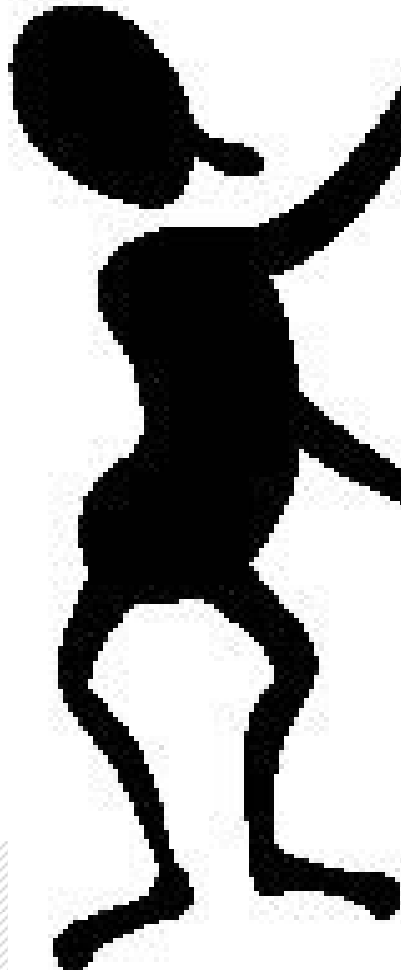


Helen Bouma





## Lay-out presentation



- How many children receive support?
- Background, principles and rules new decentralisation policy and legislation
- Gateways to and types of support & care
- Support with(out) out-of-home placement
- Bottlenecks and risks decentralisation policy
- Conclusions



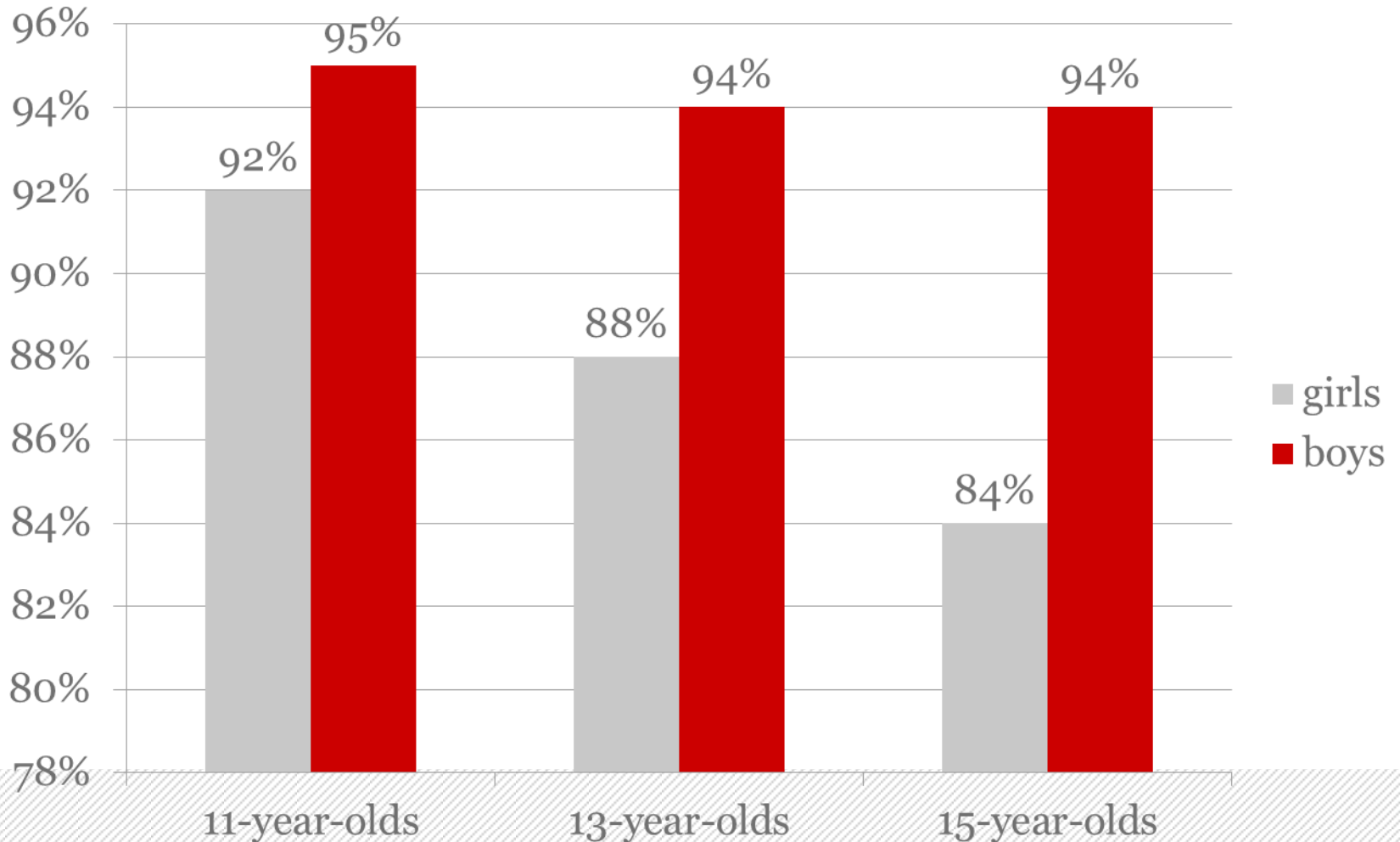


## **Dutch children, almost the most happy children in the world (HBSC study 2013-2014 survey)**





## Percentages of **Dutch children** who report **high life satisfaction** (HBSC study 2013-2014 survey, Inchley et al., 2016)





# Contrast: Child maltreatment

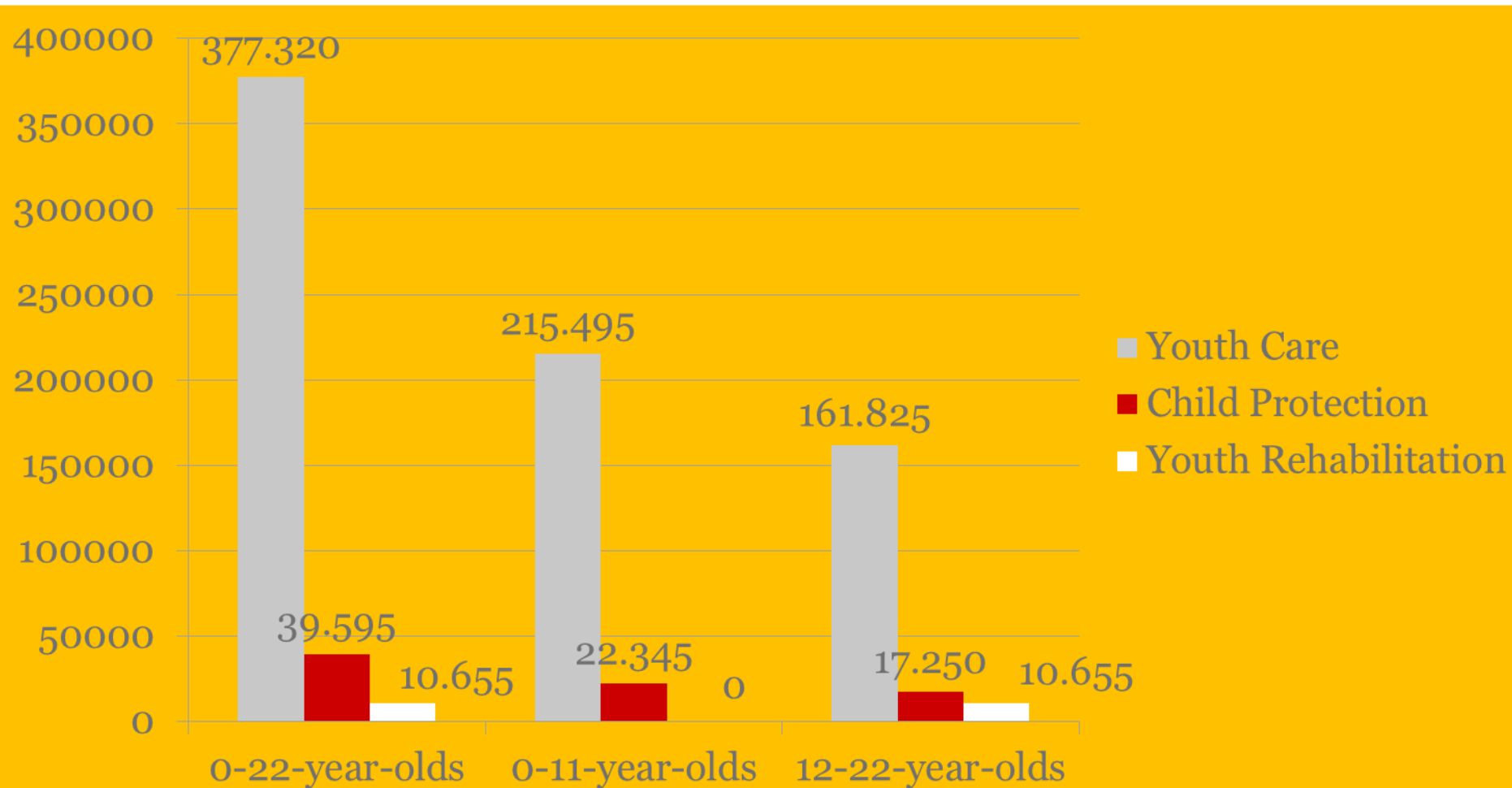
- › Family tragedies tip of the iceberg
- › Yearly  $\pm$  120.000 children suffer from maltreatment (**3,4%**):
  - Physical and emotional neglect
  - Physical and emotional abuse
  - Sexual abuse
- › In the group of 12-17 year-olds: **9,9%** feels a victim

Sharleyne (8) † 2015





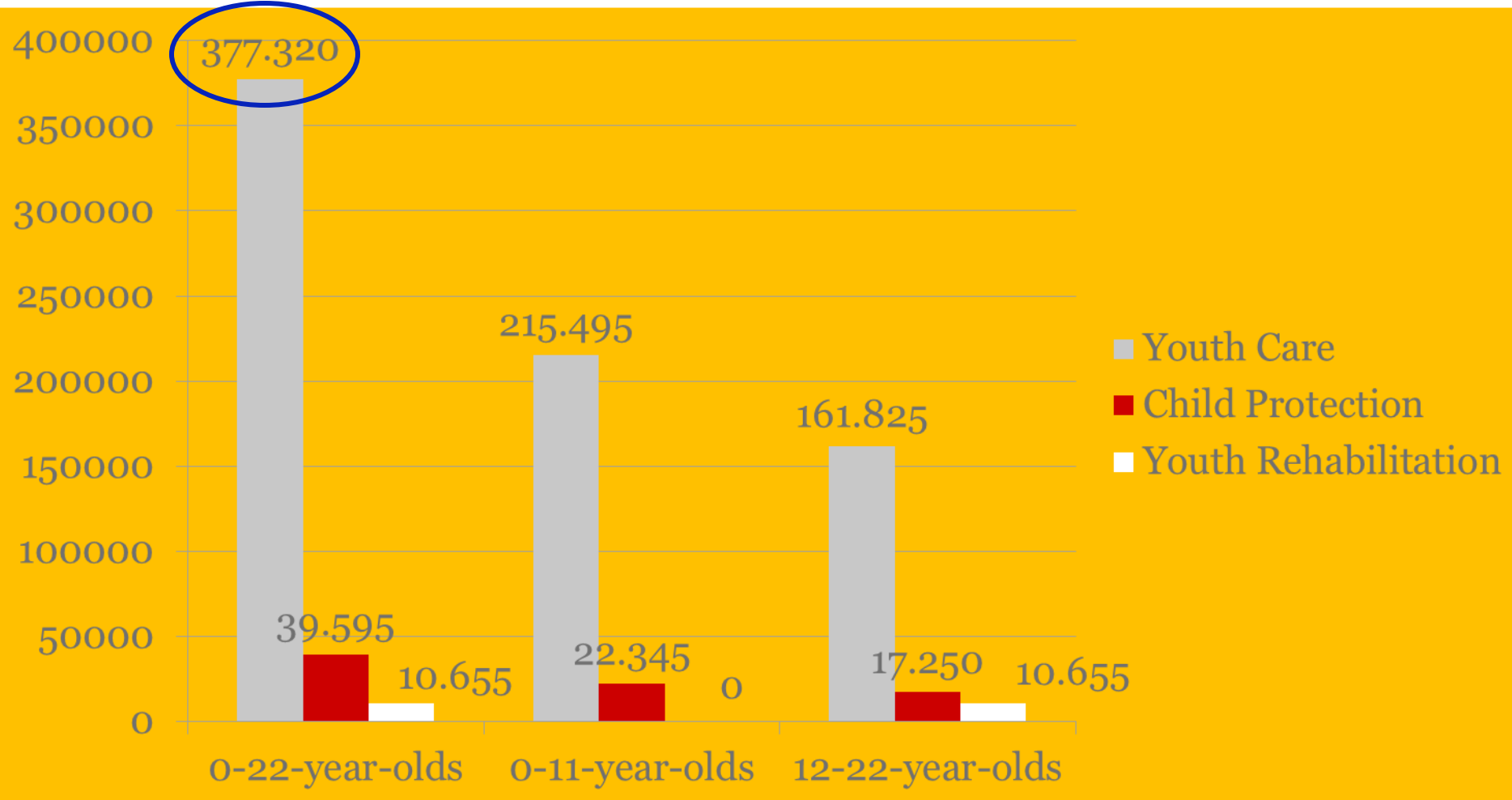
## Numbers of **Dutch children** who receive youth care, child protection, and/or youth rehabilitation, 2016 (CBS, 2017)





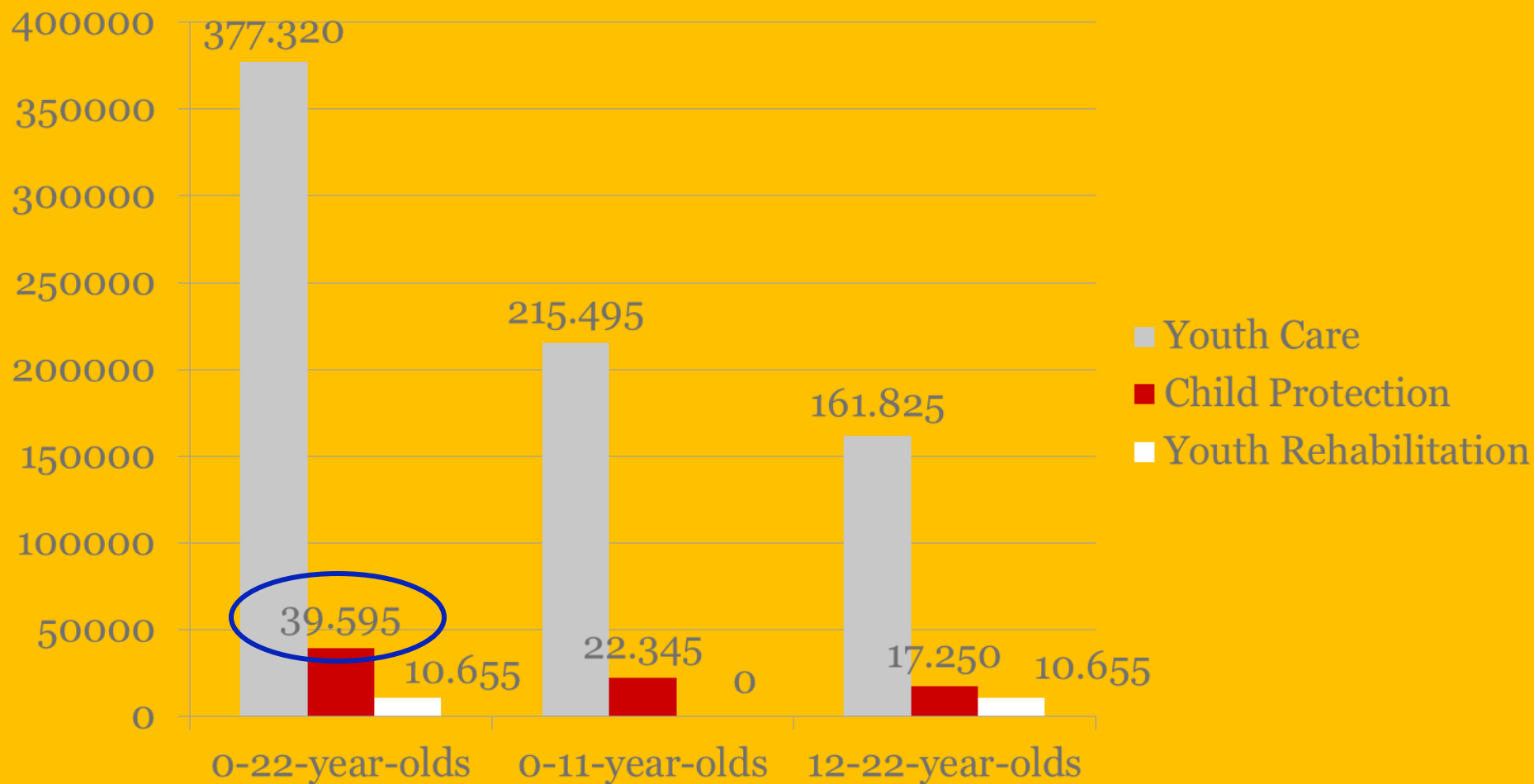


## Numbers of **Dutch children** who receive youth care, child protection, and/or youth rehabilitation, 2016 (CBS, 2017)



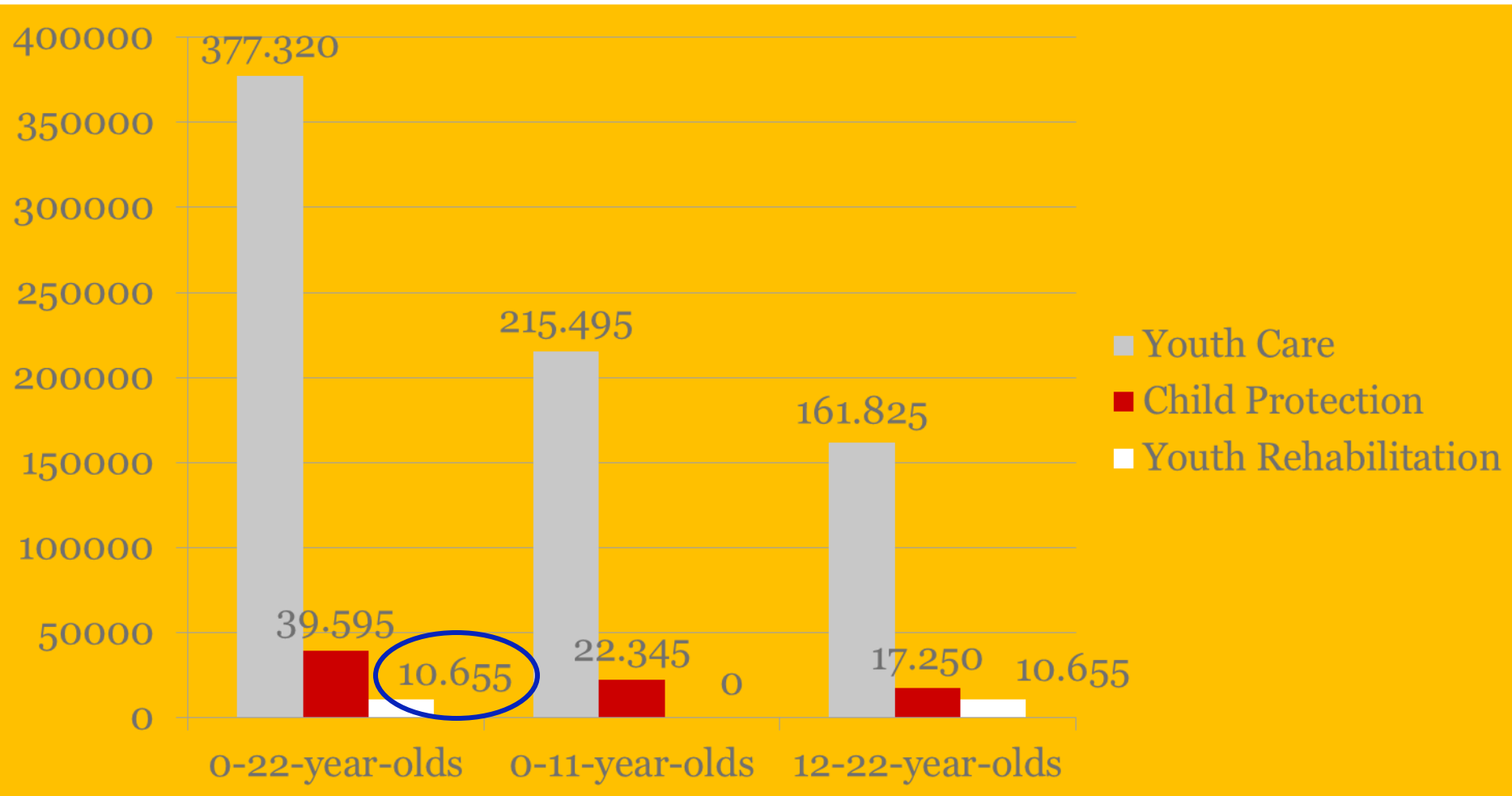


## Numbers of **Dutch children** who receive youth care, child protection, and/or youth rehabilitation, 2016 (CBS, 2017)





## Numbers of **Dutch children** who receive youth care, child protection, and/or youth rehabilitation, 2016 (CBS, 2017)





# Background new legislation 2005-2015

- › Act on Youth Care 2005 → Youth Act 2015
- › Focus on problems
- › Fragmentation & compartmentalisation
- › Differentiation of the system at the expense of own responsibility and competence clients
- › ‘Moving / passing-on’ mechanism
- › Growing ‘consumption’ of (specialised) youth care
- › Limited knowledge on (cost-)effectiveness







# Principles Youth Act 2015

- › Child and family support as nearby and as early as possible
- › Needs of the client (child, parents) are guiding
- › Children's safety is crucial and comes first
- › Normal life as much as possible (de-medicalisation, timely scaling down)
- › Empowerment and solution-focused approach
- › Engaging social network in child and family support
- › Integrated approach (cooperation between agencies)
- › One family – one plan – one director
- › Adequate and fast specialised treatment if indicated (timely scaling up)
- › Less bureaucracy; more space and training for professionals
- › Evidence-informed practice (monitoring & reflecting on outcomes)



# Additional Rules re Youth Act 2015

- › **Decentralisation:** municipalities (N=388) are responsible for **all forms** of care and support for children and families, including
  - Prevention
  - Social care
  - Mental health care
  - Care for children with impairments
  - Child protection
  - Youth rehabilitation
  
- › Directive 1: Savings up to 15%
- › Directive 2: Reduction specialized services up to 30%

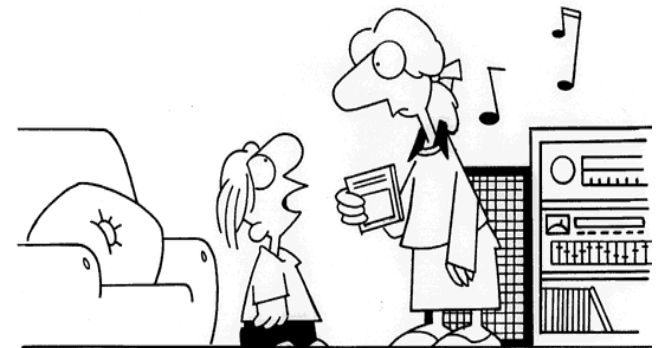




# Main gateways to youth care and protection

- › Local or district social team
- › Centre for youth and family (CJG)
- › Municipal front office for youth care
- › AMHK / Safe Home \*
- › Child Protection Board (CPB)
- › Juvenile Court
- › Police / Public Prosecution Department
- › General practitioner
- › (Pre)School

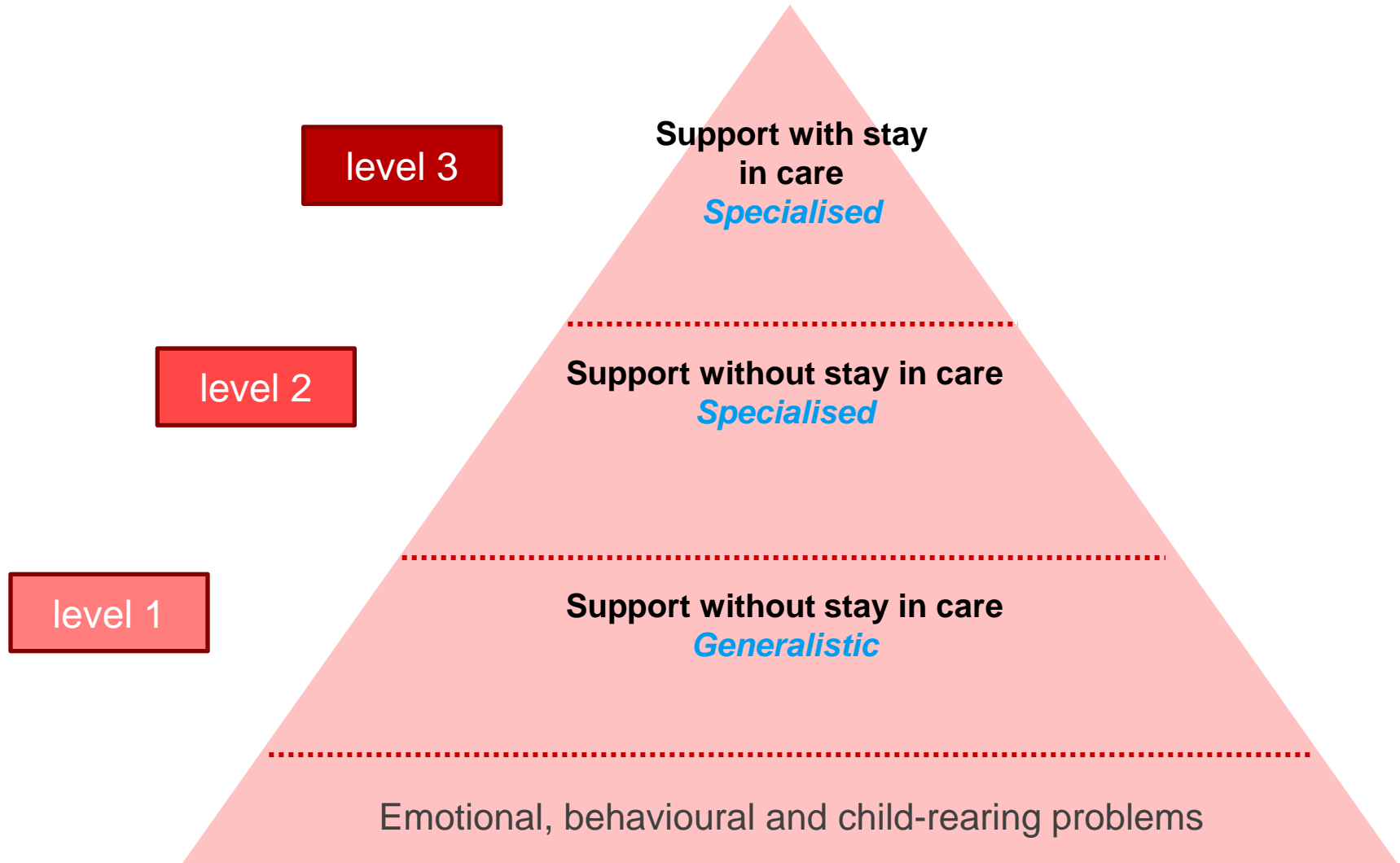
Copyright 1996 Randy Glasbergen. www.glasbergen.com



**"I spoke with a social worker today. If you keep playing 70's music, they're going to put me in a foster home."**

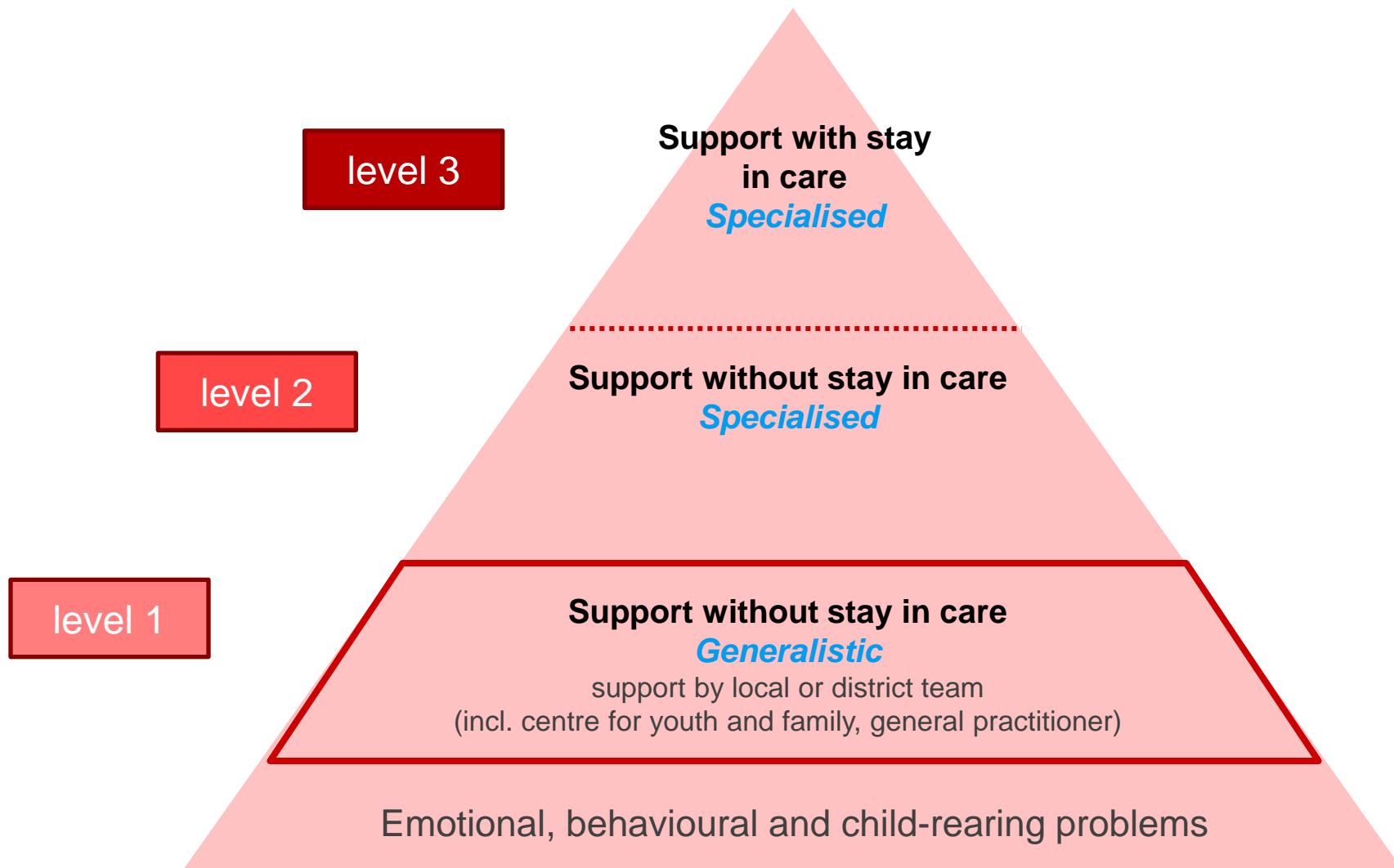
\* See also: Bouma et al. (2016), Prakken (2015)

# Care continuum

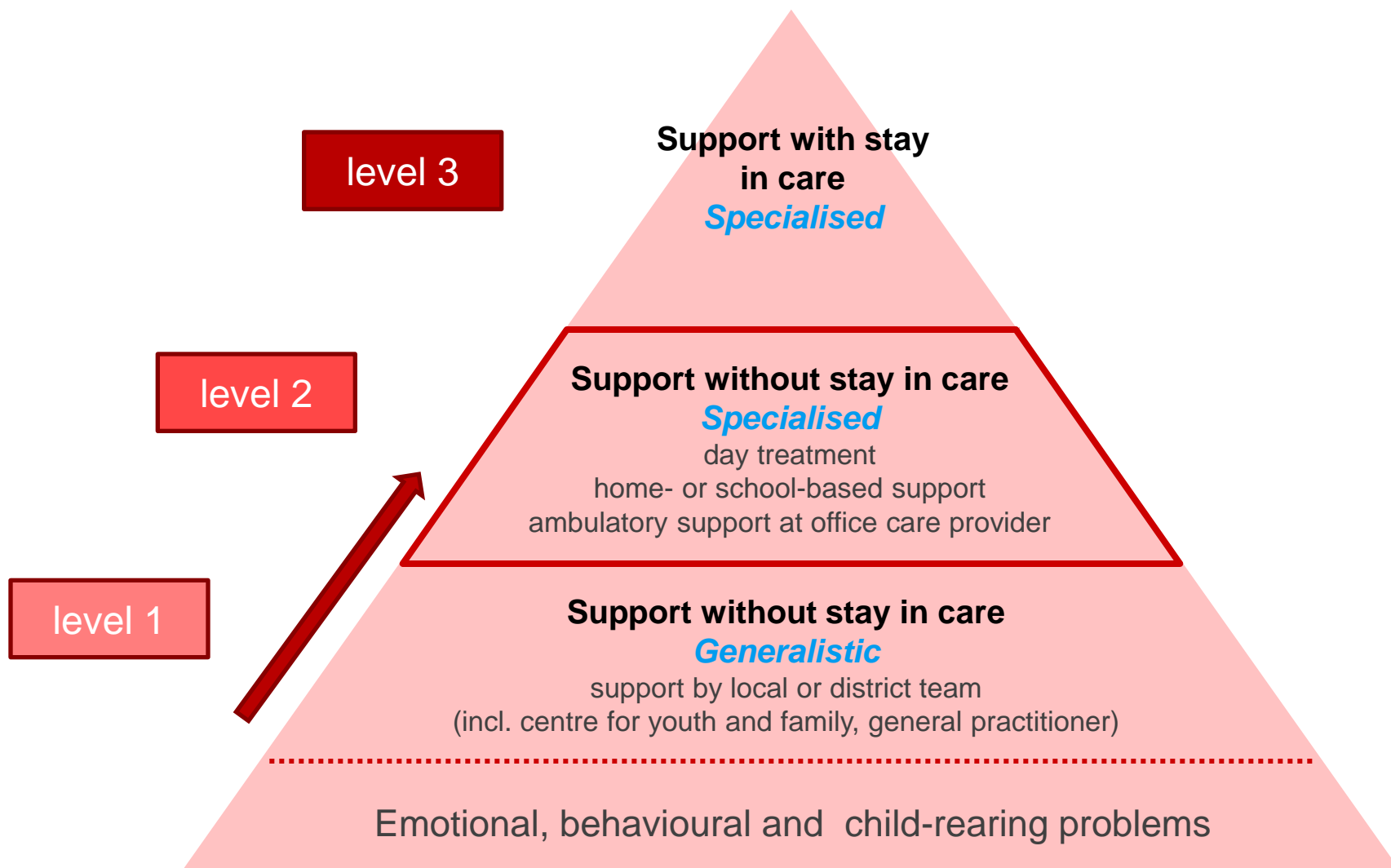




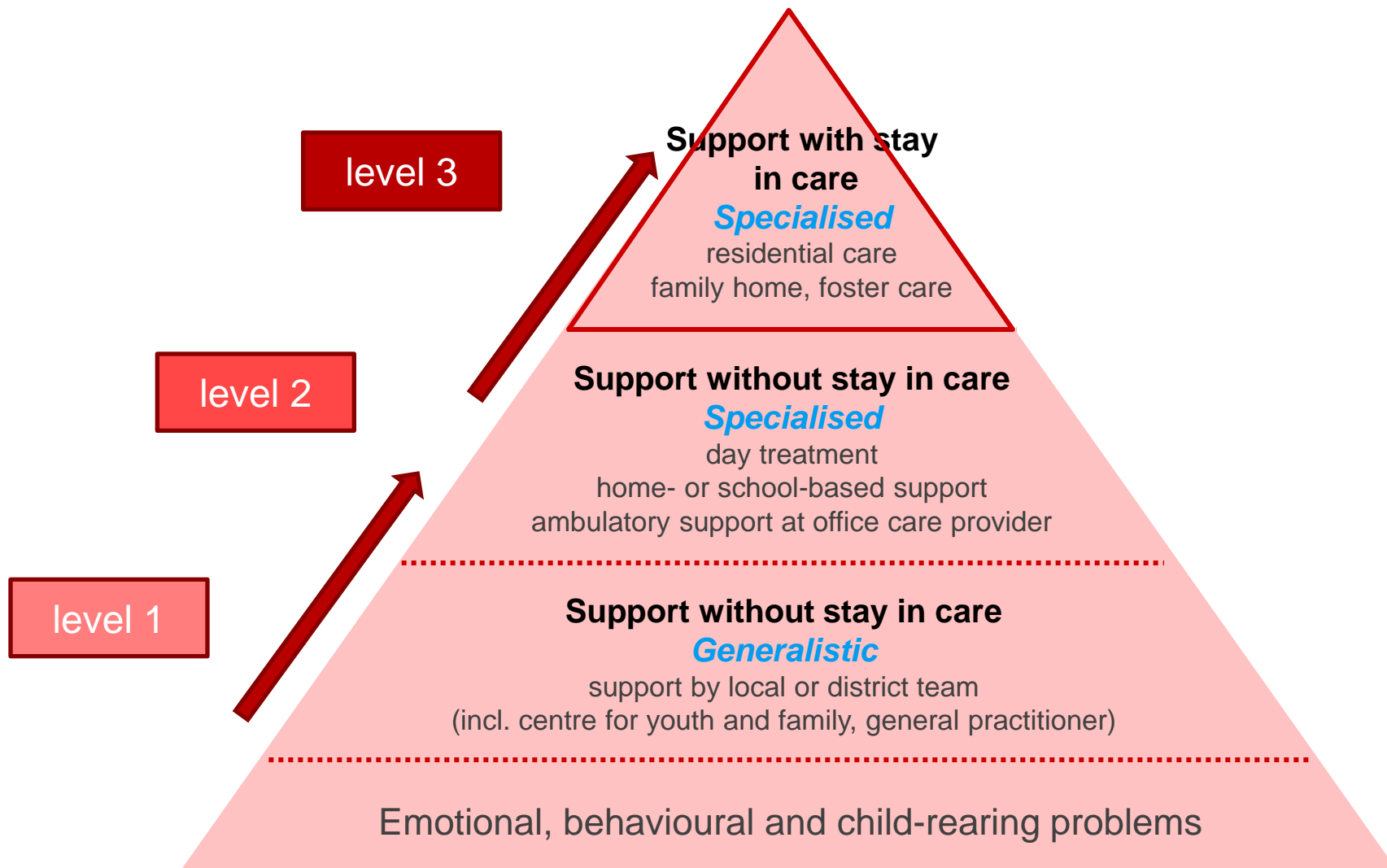
# Care continuum



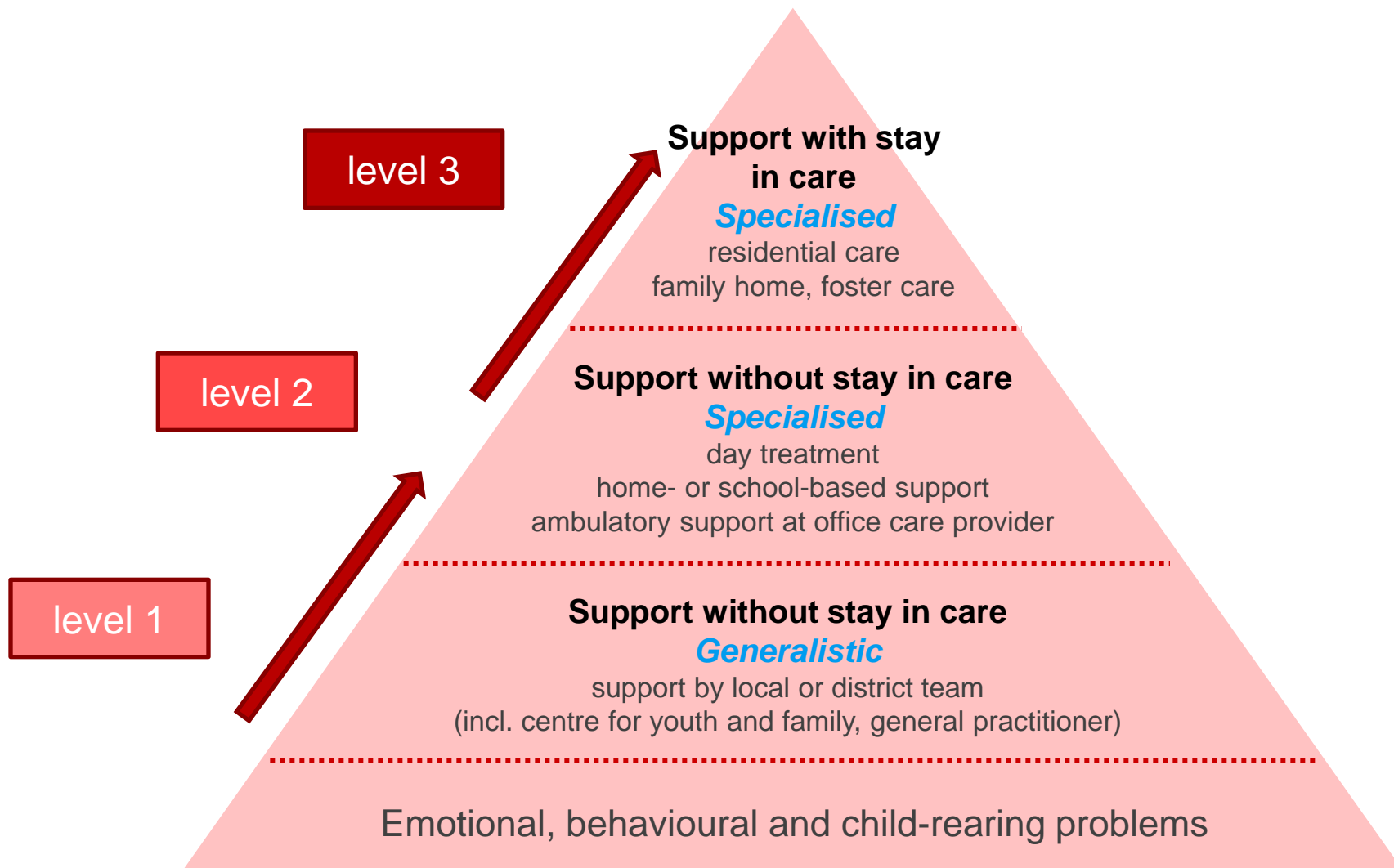
# Care continuum



# Care continuum

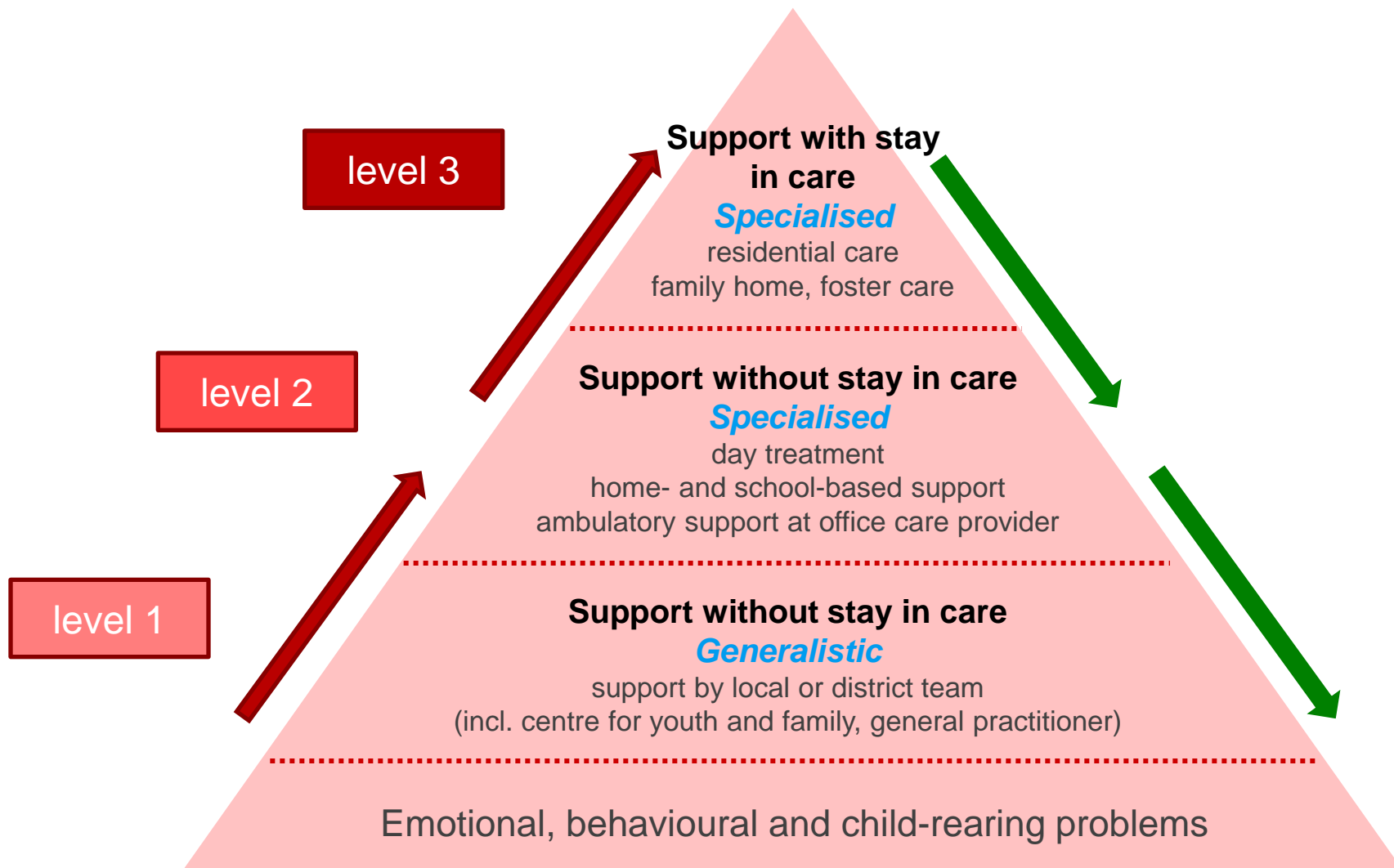


# Care continuum





# Care continuum





Number of Dutch children receiving support **without stay in care**  
(in percentages of total number of children receiving youth care in 2016 [**N=377.320**])  
(CBS, 2017)

## Children receiving youth care without stay in care

Support receivers without stay

94,8%

Support by local or district team

16,3%

Home- or school-based support

15,7%

Ambulatory support at office care provider

71,0%

Support by day treatment centre

6,8%

0,0% 20,0% 40,0% 60,0% 80,0% 100,0%



Number of Dutch children receiving support without stay in care  
(in percentages of total number of children receiving youth care in 2016 [N=377.320])  
(CBS, 2017)

## Children receiving youth care without stay in care

Support receivers without stay

94,8%

Support by local or district team

16,3%

Home- or school-based support

15,7%

Ambulatory support at office care provider

71,0%

Support by day treatment centre

6,8%

0,0% 20,0% 40,0% 60,0% 80,0% 100,0%



Number of Dutch children receiving support without stay in care  
(in percentages of total number of children receiving youth care in 2016 [N=377.320])  
(CBS, 2017)

## Children receiving youth care without stay in care

Support receivers without stay

94,8%

Support by local or district team

16,3%

Home- or school-based support

15,7%

Ambulatory support at office care provider

71,0%

Support by day treatment centre

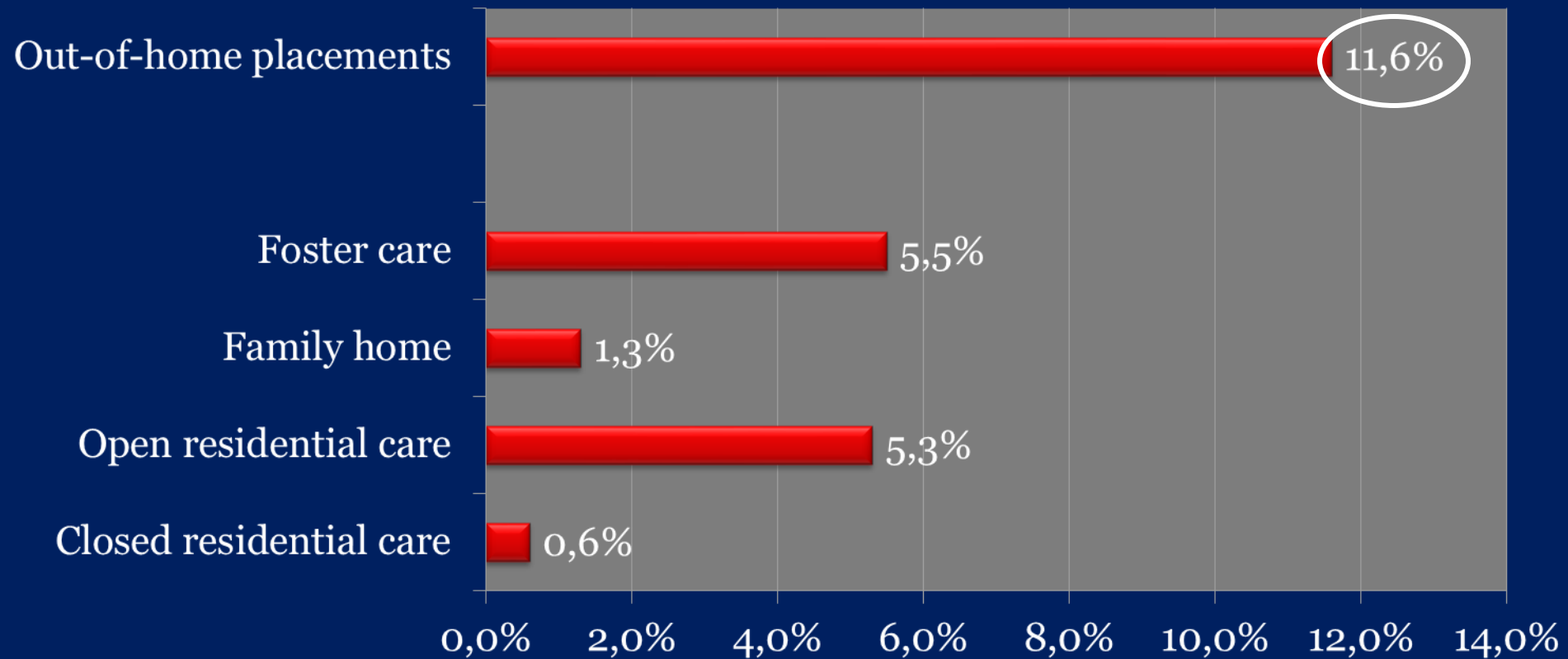
6,8%

0,0% 20,0% 40,0% 60,0% 80,0% 100,0%



Number of Dutch children receiving youth care while **placed out of home**  
(in percentages of total number of children receiving youth care in 2016 [N=377.320])  
(CBS, 2017)

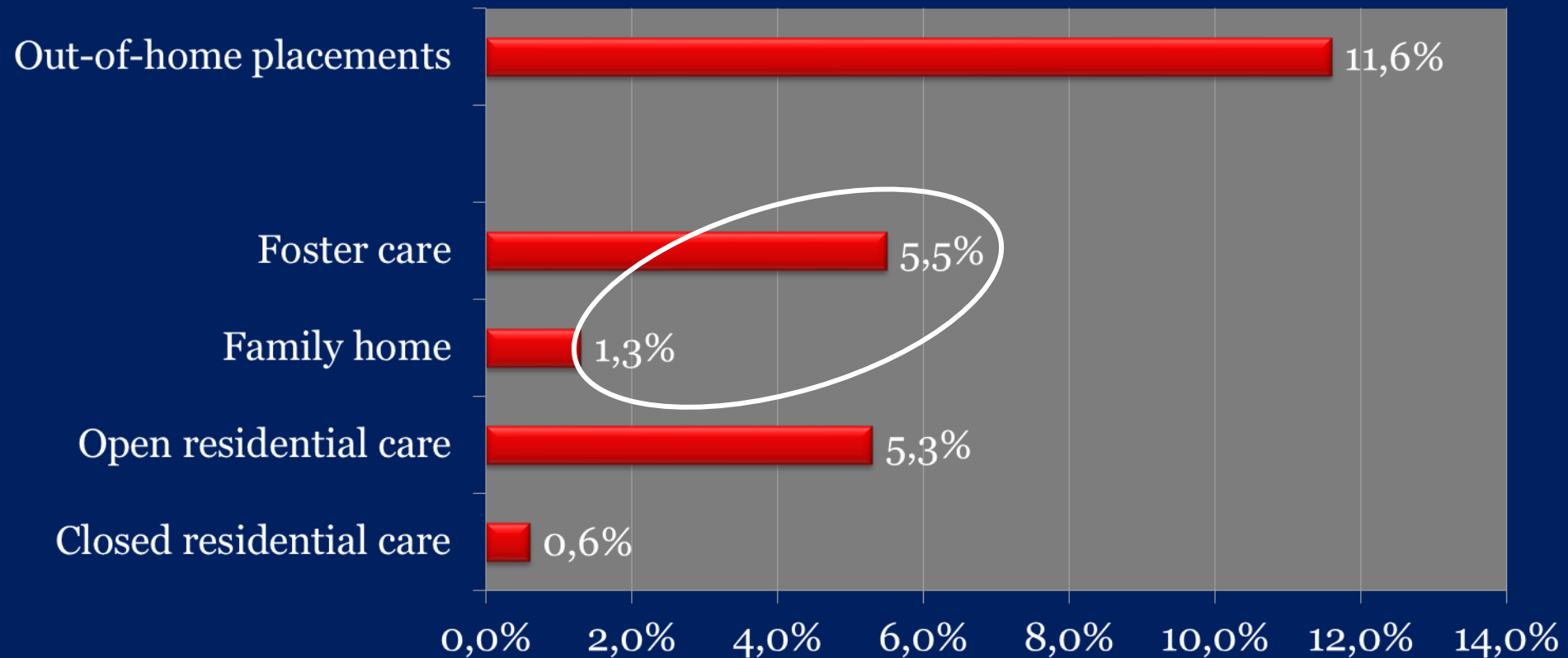
## Children placed out of home





Number of Dutch children receiving youth care while **placed out of home**  
(in percentages of total number of children receiving youth care in 2016 [N=377.320])  
(CBS, 2017)

## Children placed out of home

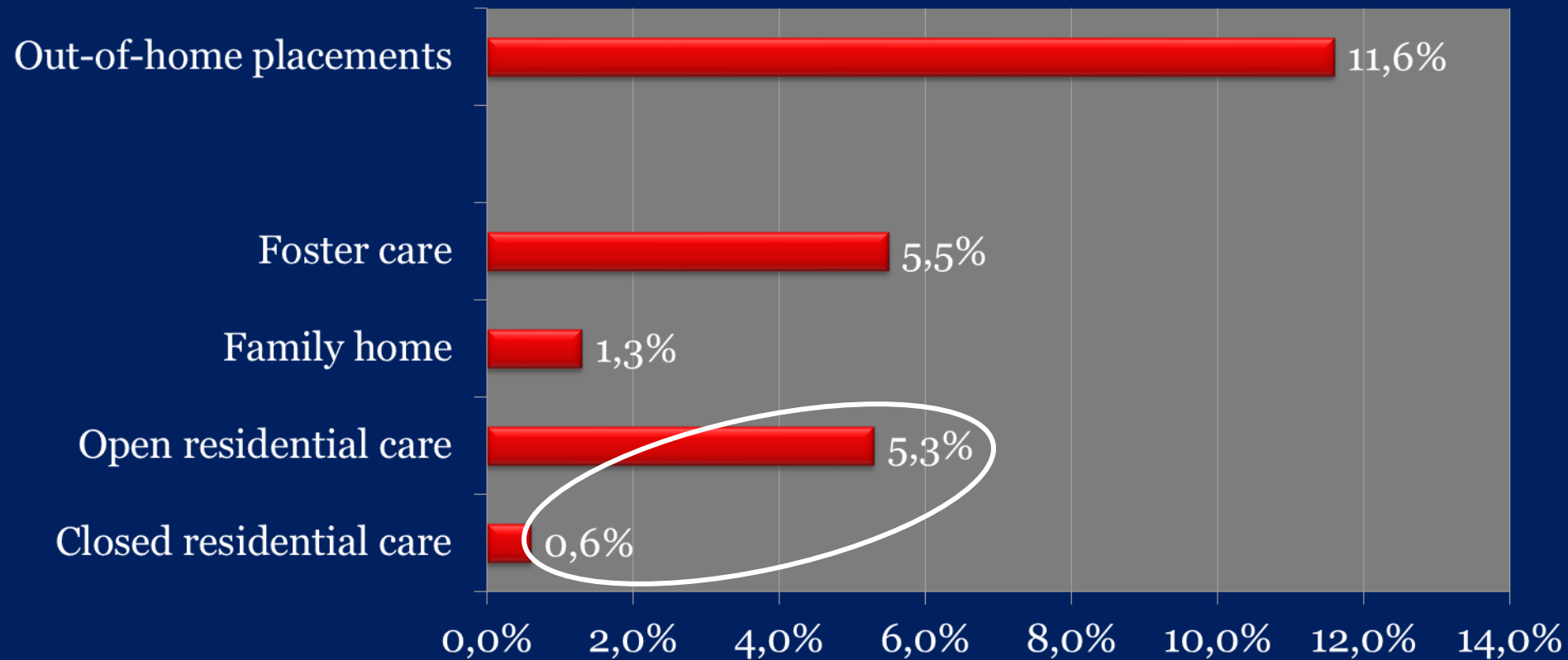






Number of Dutch children receiving youth care while **placed out of home**  
(in percentages of total number of children receiving youth care in 2016 [N=377.320])  
(CBS, 2017)

## Children placed out of home





## Rates of children in out-of-home care in some countries

- › Italy 0,38%
- › England 0,58%
- › Sweden 0,63%
- › Germany 0,76%
  
- › **Netherlands** **0,98%**
- › France 1,05%
- › Denmark 1,20%
  
- › Hungary 1,46%
- › Poland 1,47%
- › Romania 1,69%
- › Ukraine 1,94%





Significant to huge **bottlenecks decentralisation policy**,  
 according to youth care providers (N=51) (Transitie Autoriteit Jeugd, 2017)



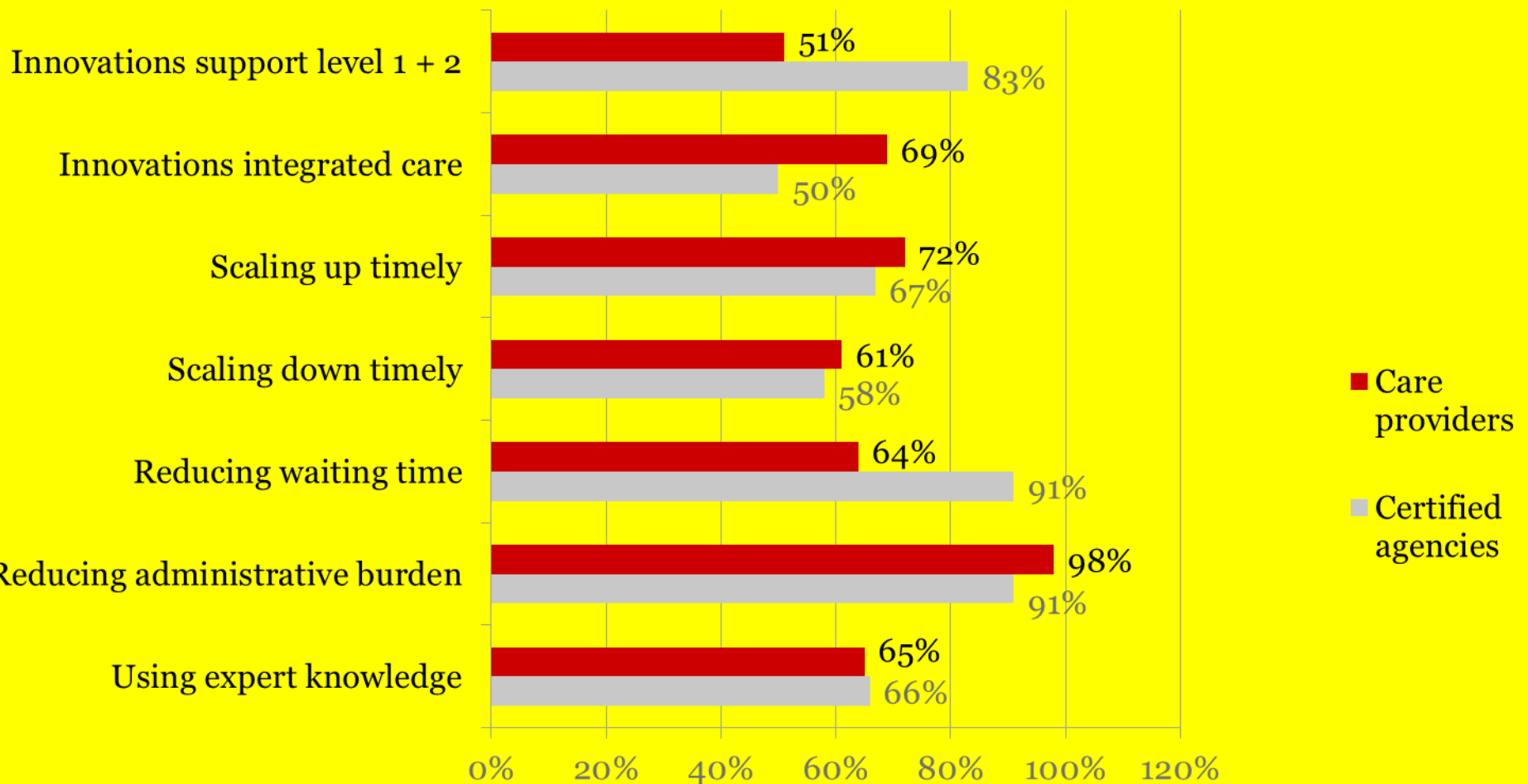


Significant to huge **bottlenecks decentralisation policy**,  
 according to certified agencies for child protection and youth rehabilitation (N=12)





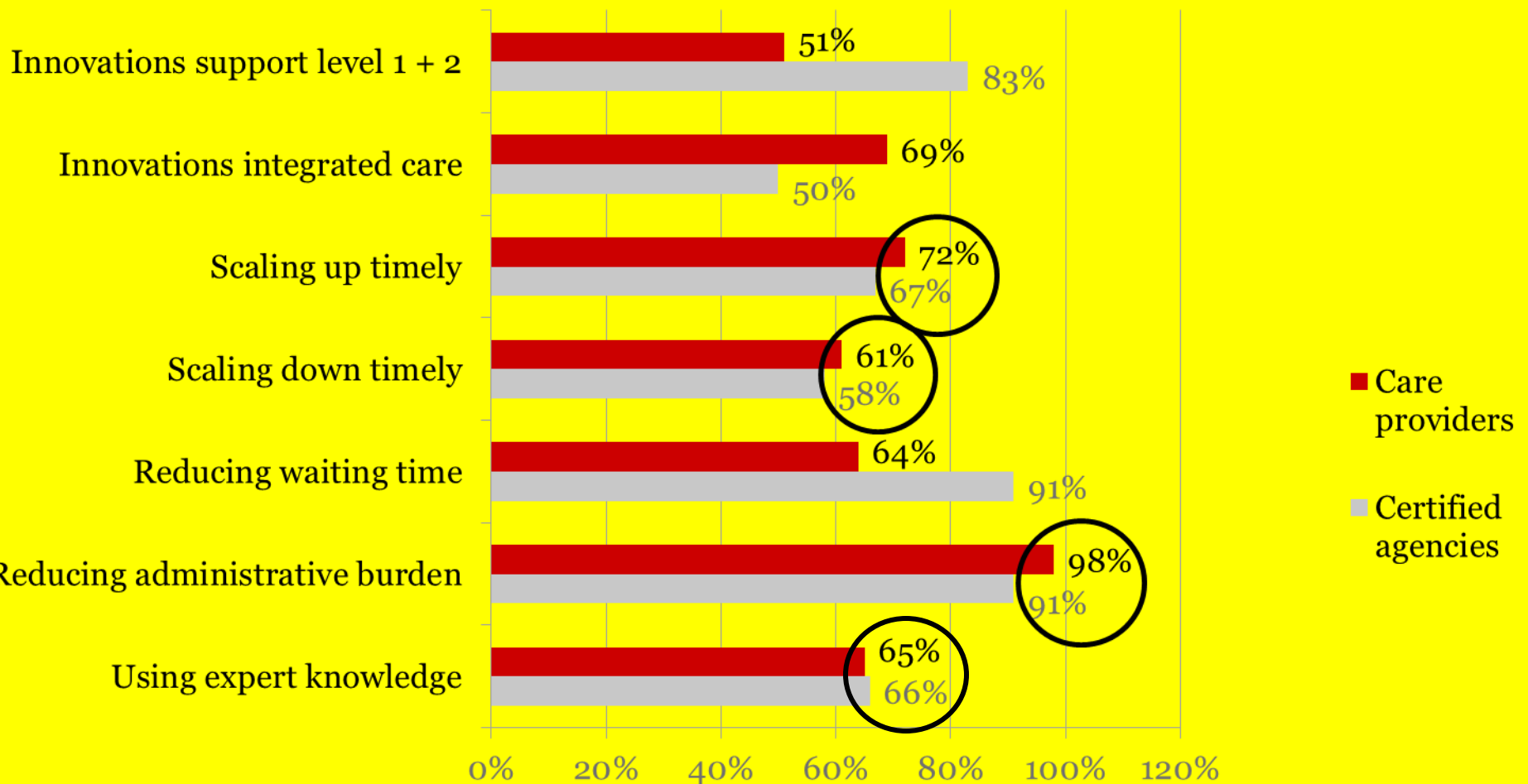
## Hardly progress or no progress at all according to care providers and certified agencies on core topics new youth care policy







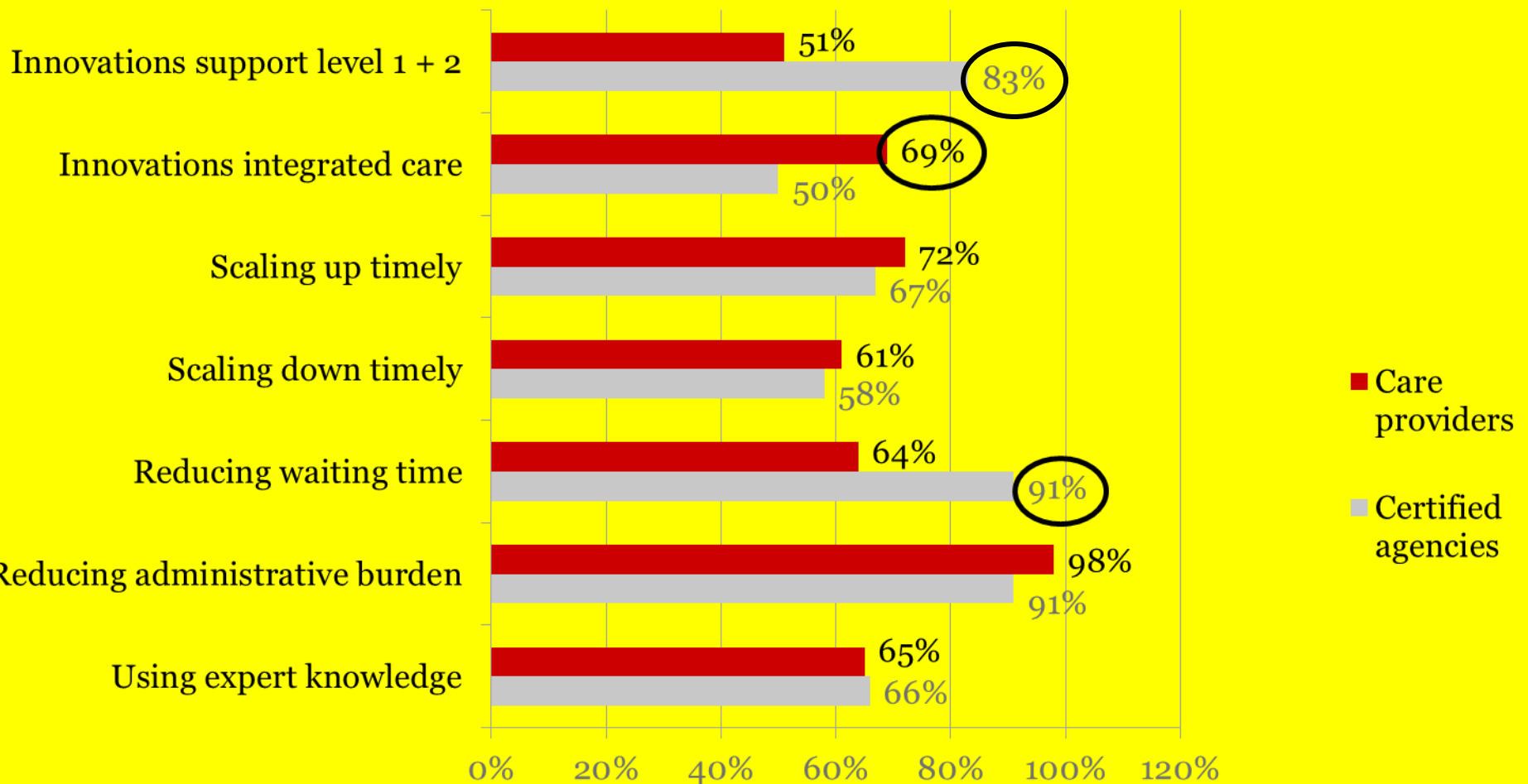
## Hardly progress or no progress at all according to care providers and certified agencies on core topics new youth care policy







## Hardly progress or no progress at all according to care providers and certified agencies on core topics new youth care policy





## Commentary Dutch Ombudsperson for Children on the developments in youth care in 2016



- There is still too much professional incompetence re assessment of problem situations and decisions on interventions
- Not enough listening to and space for children to participate in decisions re their futures
- There are too many differences between municipalities in explaining and implementing the Youth Act 2015 (with as a result legal inequality for children and families)
- Too often children and families are assumed to be able to find solutions for their problems on their own while they are not; it takes too long before specialised support has been arranged (*untimely scaling up*)
- As a result of the previous point it happens too often that young people with complex problems end up in an emergency situation and need to be admitted into closed residential care
- Personal information re children and families should not be shared by people (for instance, at the municipality office) who are not authorised
- Social workers in municipalities should be careful in exerting (too much) pressure on children and families if there is no child protection measure that justifies doing so



## Some conclusions

Nothing learned from Danish decentralisation policy\*

- Implementation of new policy takes a long time
- Extra investments necessary instead of savings
- All municipalities should garantee support services



Current risks for vulnerable children and families:

- Referral to level 2 and level 3 services too late (no scaling up)\*\*
- Specialist treatment with a stay in care less available
- Waiting time to start intervention (too) long\*\*\*
- Passing-on of children from service to service continues
- Unsafe child-rearing situations persist
- Integrated support services come into being still very laboriously



## References (1)

Alink, L. R. A., Van IJzendoorn, M. H., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J., Pannebakker, F. D., Vogels, T., & Euser, S. (2011). *Kindermishandeling in Nederland anno 2010* [Child maltreatment in the Netherlands anno 2010]. Leiden: Casimir Publishers.

Baumann, D. J., Fluke, J. D., Dagleish, L., & Kern, H. (2014). The Decision-Making Ecology. In A. Shlonsky & R. Benbenishty (eds.), *From evidence to outcomes in child welfare: An international reader* (pp. 24-38). Oxford / New York / etc.: Oxford University Press.

Bouma, H., López López, M., Knorth, E. J., & Grietens, H. (2016). *HESTIA: Briefing on the Dutch Child Protection system*. Hestia, an International Research Project on Child Protection Policy and Practice, 1-9. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/37106578/hestia\\_whitepaper\\_dutch\\_child\\_protection\\_system\\_sept2016.pdf](http://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/37106578/hestia_whitepaper_dutch_child_protection_system_sept2016.pdf)

CBS [Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek] (2017). *Jeugdhulp 2016*. [Youth care 2016]. The Hague, Author. Retrieved from:  
<http://jeugdmonitor.cbs.nl/media/220857/2017a408-jeugdhulp-2016.pdf>.

Denktank Transformatie Jeugdstelsel (2014). *Beter met minder: Bouwstenen voor de transformatie van het jeugdstelsel* [Better with less: Building blocks for transformation of the youth care system]. Utrecht: Netherlands Youth Institute. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.nji.nl/nl/Download-NJi/Publicatie-NJi/Beter-met-minder-samenvatting.pdf>

Inchley, J., Currie, D., Young, T., Samdal, O., Torsheim, T., Augustson, L., Mathison, F., Aleman-Diaz, A., Molcho, M., Weber, M., & Barnekow, V. (Eds.) (2016). *Growing up unequal: Gender and socioeconomic differences in young people's health and well-being*. [HBSC Study: International Report from the 2013/2014 Survey]. Copenhagen: World Health Organisation. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/303438/HSBC-No.7-Growing-up-unequal-Full-Report.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/303438/HSBC-No.7-Growing-up-unequal-Full-Report.pdf).

*Kind dupe van bezuinigingen in de jeugdhulp* [The child bears the brunt for the savings in youth care]. *GGZ Nieuws.nl*, December 2, 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.ggznieuws.nl/home/kind-dupe-bezuinigingen-jeugdhulp/>

Kinderombudsman (2016). *Mijn belang voorop? Ontwikkelingen in de jeugdhulp in 2016* [My interests foremost? Developments in youth care in 2016]. The Hague, Author. Retrieved from: <https://www.dekinderombudsman.nl/ul/cms/fck-uploaded/2016.KOM017%20mijn%20belang%20voorop.pdf>

Knorth, E. J. (2016). *Verzwaarde opvoeding en ontwikkeling verlichten* [Alleviating burdened child-rearing and child development]. Antwerp/Apeldoorn: Garant Publishers.





## References (2)

- Knorth, E. J., & Harder, A. T. (2009, September). *Child welfare in the Netherlands, low country blues?* Keynote address at the International Conference 'Perspectives on Child Protection: Looking back and forward', September 23-24, AC Forum Hotel, Oviedo, Spain. Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258259962\\_Child\\_welfare\\_in\\_the\\_Netherlands\\_low\\_country\\_blues](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258259962_Child_welfare_in_the_Netherlands_low_country_blues)
- Knorth, E. J., & Koopmans, A. C. (2012). Minder kinderen uithuis geplaatst? [Less children placed out of home?]. *Kind en Adolescent*, 33(1), 45-49.
- Knorth, E. J., & Reijneveld, S. A. (2013). Veiligheid van kinderen; zorgen en kansen in de transformatie van de zorg [Safety of children; concerns and chances in the transformation of youth care]. *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Gezondheidszorg*, 91(7), 364-365. doi:10.1007/s12508-013-0120-6.
- Prakken, J. (ed.) (2015). *In de wijk* [In the districts]. Utrecht: Netherlands Youth Institute (Series: Together around the child, part 2).
- Transitie Autoriteit Jeugd (2017). *Ontwikkelingen jeugdhulp 2015-2017: Samenvatting* [Developments youth care 2015-2017: Summary]. S.l.: Author. Retrieved from: <https://transitieautoriteitjeugd.nl/nieuws/ontwikkelingen-jeugdhulp-2015-2017>
- Thoburn, J., & Ainsworth, F. (2015). Making sense of differential cross-national placement rates for therapeutic residential care. In J. K. Whittaker, J. F. del Valle, & L. Holmes (eds.), *Therapeutic residential care for children and youth* (pp. 37-46). London, UK / Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Van den Berg, G., Daamen, W., Addink, A., Gorissen, W., & Vink, C. (2017). *Wacht maar. Onderzoek naar wachttijden en wachtlijsten in jeugdzorg en jeugdhulp* [Just wait. A study of waiting time and waiting lists in youth care]. Utrecht: Netherlands Youth Institute. Retrieved from: <http://www.nji.nl/nl/Download-NJi/Publicatie-NJi/Wacht-maar.pdf>
- Van der Helm, P. (2017). Gemeenten denken te snel dat ze kunnen besparen op jeugdzorg [Municipalities think too often that savings on youth care services are possible]. *Sociale Vraagstukken* (January 16, 2017). Retrieved from: <https://www.socialevraagstukken.nl/gemeenten-denken-te-snel-dat-ze-kunnen-besparen-op-jeugdzorg/>
- Van Rooijen, M. (2017). *De handen ineen voor specialistische jeugdhulp* [Working together for specialised youth care]. Utrecht: Netherlands Youth Institute (Series: Together around the child, part 5).
- Woestenburg, T. (2014). De nieuwe jeugdzorgwet wordt precies verkeerd ingevoerd [The new Youth Act is going to be implemented completely wrong]. *De Correspondent*. Retrieved from: <https://decorrespondent.nl/1078/de-nieuwe-jeugdzorgwet-wordt-precies-verkeerd-ingevoerd/84791067746-b5fc0fbf>

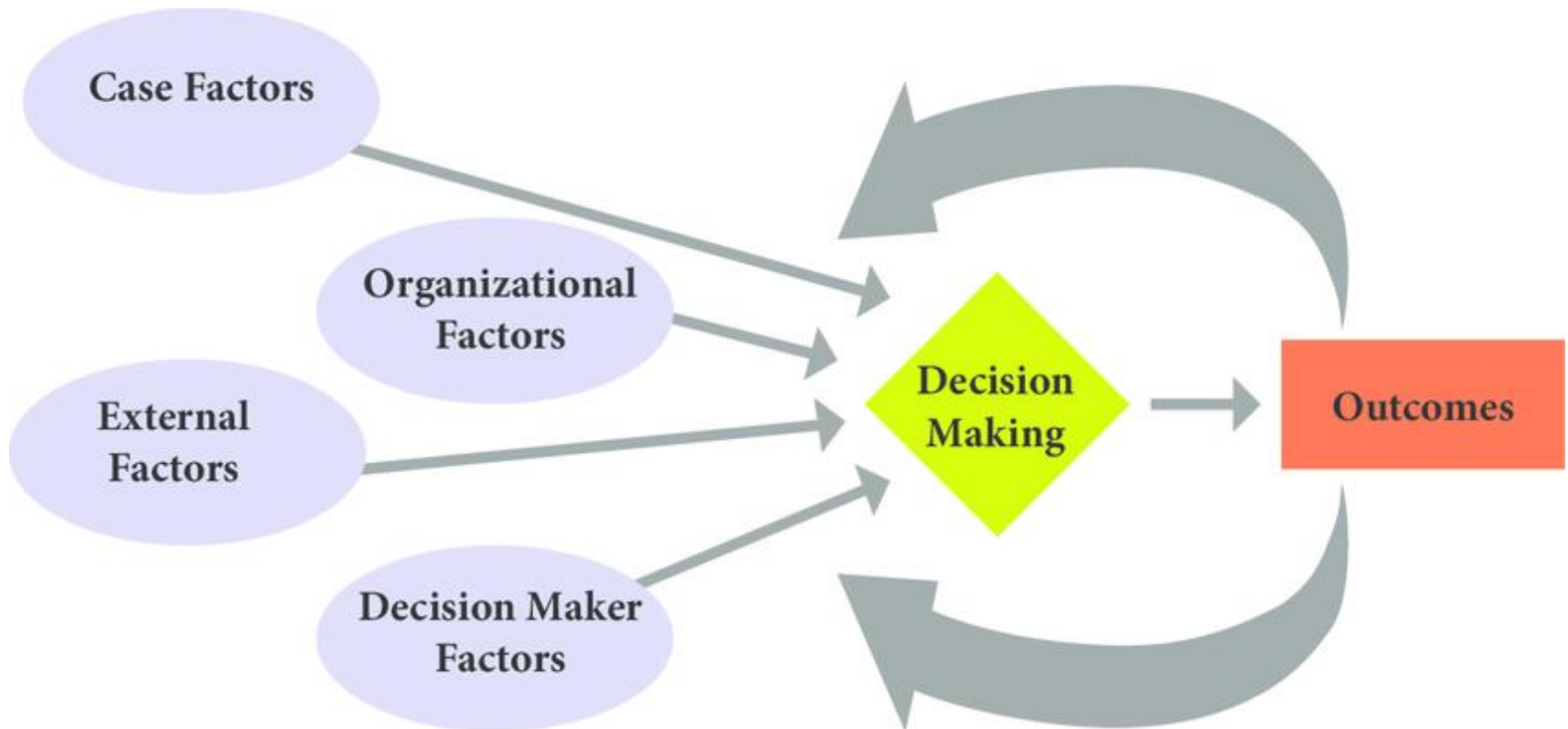


Thanks for your attention!



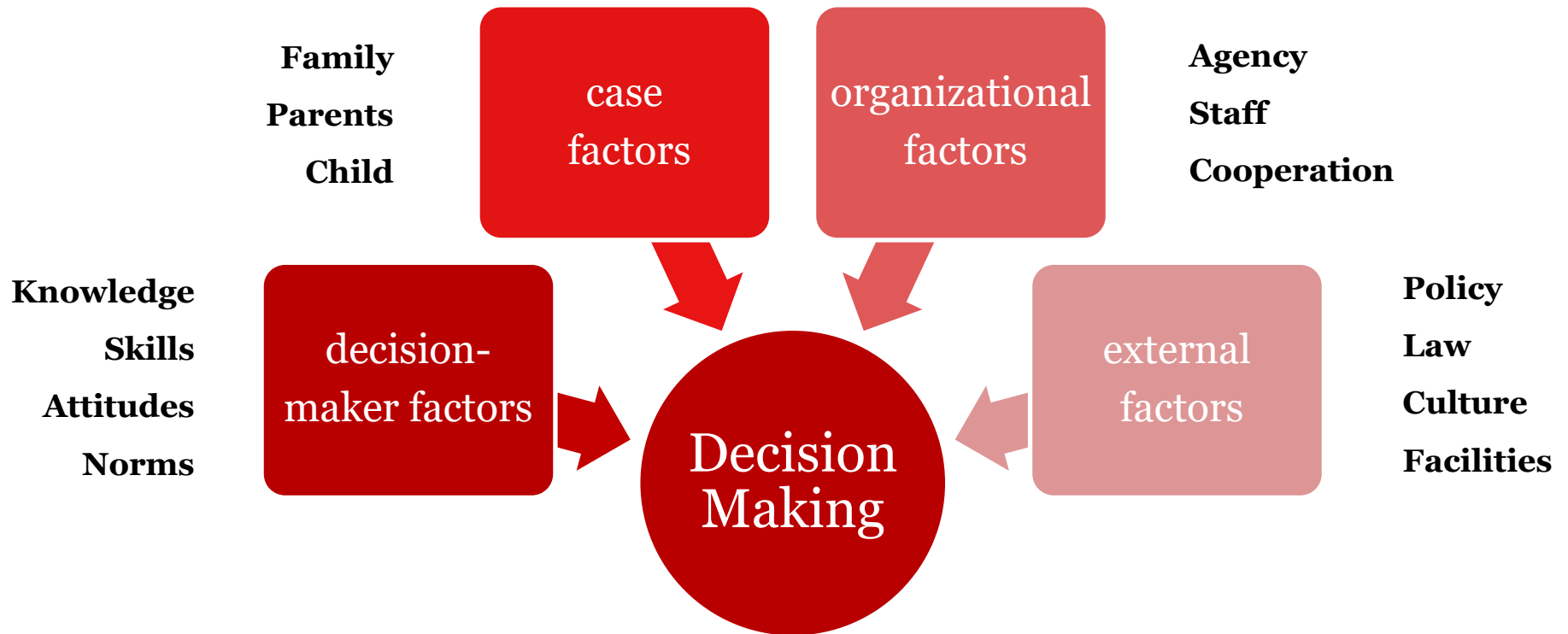


# Appendix: Decision-Making Ecology (DME)





# Ecological frame for decision making



cf. Baumann, Fluke, Dalglish & Kern (2014)